(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR) : (a) to (c) Lower Koti is not a sub-post office, but is only a branch Post Office. Branch Post Offices are not authorised for collection of telephone bills under the existing policy of the Department of Posts.

Extension of distance of local calls

†2593. SHRI ANIL SHARMA : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government propose to extend distance of local calls in view of modern technology;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR) : (a) and (b) Sir, at present there is no proposal to enhance distance slab for local call facility.

(c) (i) The local call facility is currently being allowed for calls made anywhere in Short Distance Charging Area (SDCA), which is generally co-terminus with a tehsil. The local call facility is also extended to the calls made to adjoining SDCA.

(ii) Further, with a view to promote community of interest, the charges for intra-circles STD calls of distance above 50 Kms and upto 200 Kms have already been reduced with effect from 26-1-2000. The call charges for distances 50-100 Kms and 100-200 Kms are now 1/8th and 1/2 respectivel of the earlier rates.

(iii) As local call facility is already being provided over quite a long distance and intra-circle call charges have also been reduced, there is no proposal at present to review the existing facility.

STD/ISD/PCO Booths in Arunachal Pradesh

2594. SHRI NABAM REBIA : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) the details of the applications for providing STD/ISD/Telephones and PCO booths in all the telecom circles of Arunachal Pradesh pending with Government during the last two years; and

(b) the steps taken by Government in this regard ?

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.